

HUNTING RULES & REGULATIONS

Refuge-specific regulations for hunting on National Wildlife Refuges are set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations Title 50, Part 32. Copies may be requested from the Refuge Office. The following summary is for your convenience.

License Requirements

All hunters on Sunkhaze Meadows NWR must follow the licensing guidelines set by the state of Maine. Hunters must be in possession of their state hunting license at all times while hunting on the refuge.

Hours

We allow hunters to enter the refuge 1 hour before legal shooting hours, and they must exit the refuge by 1 hour past legal shooting hours, except for hunters pursuing raccoons or coyotes at night.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in part 32).

Tree Stands/Blinds

The construction or use of permanent structures is prohibited on refuge lands. Only temporary or portable blinds or ladders may be used.

Trimming or cutting branches is prohibited. It is unlawful to drive a nail, spike, climbing screw, or other metal object into any tree or to hunt from any tree in which a nail, spike, climbing screw, or other metal object has been driven.

All tree stands must have the name, address, phone number, and hunting license number of the owner clearly printed on any stand that is left overnight. Big game hunters must remove all tree stands, blinds, and ladders from the refuge by the last day of the white-tailed deer hunting season.

Migratory game bird hunters are required to remove all portable or temporary blinds and decoys from the refuge following each days hunt.

Non- toxic Shot

Hunters must use and possess only non-toxic shot while hunting migratory game birds and small game.

Youth Hunting Day

We allow youth hunting during the state prescribed youth hunting days in accordance with state regulations and bag limits.

Baiting

Baiting or hunting over bait is prohibited on the refuge for all species, including coyotes and bears.

Hunter Orange Clothing Requirements

Hunter orange clothing is required in accordance with State of Maine regulations.

Camping and fires

Camping and overnight parking are prohibited. Fires are prohibited. Please remove litter from the refuge.

Vehicles

Only legally licensed vehicles are allowed on refuge roads. Vehicles are permitted only on public roads and refuge access roads. Off road vehicles including ATV’s are prohibited.

Alcoholic Beverages

The possession or use of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.

Dogs

We allow pointing and flushing dogs. Hunters may also use pursuit hounds to hunt animals such as raccoon, fox, bobcat, coyote and bear.

Trapping

Trapping at Sunkhaze (Milford Division) is allowed by Special Use Permit only in accordance with State and Federal regulations.

Carlton Pond Waterfowl Production Area is open to public trapping without Federal permit. Trappers must obey any official signs that may be posted regarding temporary closures.

Artificial Light

The use of a spotlight or any other artificial light, including automotive headlights for the purpose of spotting, locating, or taking any animal is prohibited all year. *Except during night coyote hunting season with proper equipment and permits.

Areas open to Hunting

Sunkhaze Meadows Division (Milford)
Carlton Pond Water-fowl Production Area (Troy)
Benton Division (Benton)
Sandy Stream Division (Unity)

These areas are open to the hunting of migratory game birds and waterfowl, and small and big game.

WHERE, WHEN AND WHAT CAN YOU HUNT?

Black Bear, Bobcat, and Eastern Coyote

We allow hunting of black bear, bobcat, and Eastern coyote in accordance with State regulations and bag limits with the exception that all species, including coyotes, harvested on the Refuge, must be retrieved by the hunter, and we restrict the length of the coyote season.

When can you hunt black bear, bobcat and coyote?

- We allow bear hunting from Oct.1 to the end of the State prescribed season.
- We allow bobcat hunting during the State Prescribed season.
 - We allow coyote hunting from October 1 to March 31. We allow night hunting for coyotes from December 16 – March 31.

Where can you hunt black bear, bobcat, and coyote?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

White-Tail Deer

We allow hunting white-tail deer in accordance with State regulations, seasons, and bag limits.

When can you hunt Deer?
You may hunt deer in accordance with the State prescribed deer season.

Where can you hunt Deer?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

Small Game

We allow hunting of ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare, red fox, gray and red squirrel, raccoon, skunk, and woodchuck in accordance with State regulations and bag limits. Hunters must use and possess only non-toxic shot while hunting upland game.

When can you hunt Upland Game?
We allow hunting of above mentioned small game during the State prescribed seasons.

Where can you hunt?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

Migratory Game Bird Hunting

We allow hunting of ducks, geese, American woodcock, rail, gallinule, and Wilson’s snipe in accordance to the State and Federal regulations and bag limits. See also “Non Toxic Shot” section.

When can you hunt Migratory Game Birds?
During the state prescribed seasons.

Where can you hunt Migratory Game Birds?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

Turkey Hunting

We allow the hunting of turkey in accordance with the State regulations and bags limits.

When can you hunt Turkeys?
During the state prescribed seasons.

Where can you Turkeys?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

Moose

You must have a valid moose permit for the appropriate Wildlife Management District to hunt moose.

When can you hunt moose?
You may hunt moose in accordance with the State prescribed moose season.

Where can you hunt moose?
Sunkhaze Meadows (Milford)
Carlton Pond WPA (Troy)
Benton (Benton)
Sandy Stream (Unity)

Signs used to Protect Visitors and Resources

Millions of people visit National Wildlife Refuges each year. The impact of human activity, if not regulated, can degrade these wild lands. Signs control recreational activities while protecting natural resources on the refuge. Please respect the following signs.



This sign delineates the refuge boundary. Entry is permitted only for authorized uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, etc.) in accordance with refuge regulations.



This area is closed to all public entry. No hunting, fishing or other activities are permitted. Roads or trails posted with this sign are also closed.



This sign delineates the boundary of Carlton Pond Waterfowl Production Area. Entry is permitted only for authorized uses (hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife observation, etc.).

